

Washington SmartBuying Partnership update

March 2006

Inside the March update:

- Current office equipment contracts extended
- Training set March 21 on new office supplies contract
- Website offers new ways to save

IT savings top \$1 million in first quarter

State agencies, higher education institutions and nonprofit organizations all saved on computer hardware and software from July to September 2005.

- Computer purchases contributed almost 90 percent of the savings.
- The Department of Information Services handles SmartBuying contracts for information technology hardware and software.
- DIS website for savings: http://techmall.dis.wa.gov/master_contracts/smartbuying/default_smartbuying.aspx

Color copies, envelope savings top \$100,000

SmartBuying savings through reduced color copy prices in copy centers and cuts in the prices for standard envelopes were just over \$100,000 in the first quarter of fiscal year 2005. The Department of Printing manages these contracts.

- Printing's website: <http://www.prt.wa.gov/>

L&I director knows 'smart buying' firsthand

The Department of Labor and Industries' director is no stranger to "smart buying" procurement by state agencies. Gary Weeks, who became L&I's director in May 2005, started Oregon's Smart Buy Program while serving as director of state government operations in 2003.

Weeks shares his observations about Washington's SmartBuying Partnership, why it's valuable, and what it will take to be successful.



Gary Weeks

How did the Smart Buy Program come about in Oregon?

Strategic purchasing has a proven track record in the private sector. In recent years, a dozen states, including Oregon, have begun changing their purchasing practices to get better prices on goods and services – everything from pens to computers. When you think about it, strategic purchasing makes so much sense. Why use different vendors and pay different prices? Governor Kulongoski agreed, and directed us to establish the Smart Buy Program.

What will make Washington's SmartBuying Partnership successful?

We need to act as one enterprise to reach that target. We can't think of ourselves as separate entities – Department A or Agency B – we're one big business named the State of Washington. We need to view our purchasing decisions through that lens.

Are there other benefits?

Definitely. For example, if all state agencies use the same configuration of a computer, employees can transfer from section to section, agency to agency, and not require training on that computer.

What will jeopardize SmartBuying?

If the enterprise approach falters, the savings will evaporate. Everyone has to participate. The big agencies and the small agencies that together make up the enterprise have to be on board.

What other considerations affect success?

We need to pay attention to community concerns, such as buying locally and buying from minority- and women-owned businesses. When you plan ahead, you can get positive outcomes. Because we did that in Oregon, we were able to address the concerns that local and minority vendors raised. We also need to accommodate unique purchasing needs.

Is L&I actively participating in SmartBuying?

Yes. A lot of work was under way when I came to L&I. We were gathering data to share with the statewide procurement teams. We were represented on the SmartBuying Partnership leadership team. We're ready to do our part. Strategic purchasing is consistent with making sure L&I spends public dollars responsibly. I'm committed to that.



Office equipment contracts extended

The current office equipment contracts (multifunctional device) that were set to expire have been extended for another six months or until a new contract is developed. The departments of General Administration and Printing had expected to award a new SmartBuying contract that had gone through the bidding and evaluation process. However, a recent Thurston County Superior Court ruling resulted in the decision to extend the existing contracts.

Existing office equipment contracts will be extended pending future award of a new contract.

Existing office equipment contracts

- Digital copiers (black-and-white machines – contract 05899 (mandatory use)
<https://fortress.wa.gov/ga/inet/servlet/PCAContractDetailSv?contnbr=05899>
- Fax machines and service – contract 00902 (mandatory use)
<https://fortress.wa.gov/ga/inet/servlet/PCAContractDetailSv?contnbr=00902>
- Color copiers – contract 07903 (mandatory use)
<https://fortress.wa.gov/ga/inet/servlet/PCAContractDetailSv?contnbr=07903>

Central Stores one-stop ordering due soon

Central Stores will soon begin offering a convenient one-stop ordering process that will allow you to save money and time when buying office supplies, paper and toner through new SmartBuying contracts. You will also be able to buy other items that are available on existing contracts through Central Stores, which is managed the by General Administration. Users will be able to request one monthly invoice for all items ordered through Central Stores. All items that are part of new SmartBuying contracts will be noted by a green dollar sign \$

Information sessions set March 21

Staff from Central Stores and Office Depot are now in the process of setting up information sessions March 21 at the Labor and Industries Building in Tumwater. You will learn more about how to use the new SmartBuying contracts. Staff will be on hand to answer questions.

Register online at: <http://www.ga.wa.gov/events/sbphome.htm>

Transition to Office Depot

The new contracts expected to take effect March 20 mark a transition to supplies being made available by Office Depot, instead of Office Max.

Additional details about one-stop ordering

<https://fortress.wa.gov/ga/inet/cs/AS-FAQ.htm>

Shop Central Stores

<http://www.ga.wa.gov/centralstores/>

Website page offers new savings opportunities

The SmartBuying Partnership website has added a “Contract Savings Opportunities” page to help state agencies and others take advantage of savings.

The page includes SmartBuying contracts as well as others that offer savings opportunities. Those contracts that have been through the SmartBuying analysis are noted with a green dollar sign next to them.

Find “Contract Savings Opportunities” at:

<http://smartbuying.wa.gov/contractsavings.htm>